

REMARKS

The above amendments and following remarks are responsive to the points raised in the November 2, 2005 non-final Office Action. Upon entry of the above amendments, Claims 1, 2, 4, 8, 13-17, 19, 21, 22, 24, and 25 will have been amended, Claims 12 and 20 will have been canceled, and Claims 1-11, 13-19, and 21-25 will be pending. No new matter has been introduced. Entry and reconsideration are respectfully requested.

Response to Claim Objection

Claims 1-6, 8, and 12-19 have been objected on the basis of various informalities identified by the Examiner.

The above amendments to the claims obviate the issues raised by the Examiner.

Accordingly, the objection to the claims is now moot and should be withdrawn.

Response to Rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e)

Claims 12-14 and 19 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being unpatentable over US Patent 6,323,967 to Fujinawa. Although the Examiner did not specifically identify Claims 20, 24, and 25 in the first sentence of the rejection set forth in item 4 of the non-final Office Action, but did, however, discuss such claims, in regard to Fujinawa, in the body of the rejection, Applicants have treated Claims 20, 24, and 25 as being rejected with Claims 1-14 and 19. Applicants traverse this rejection.

As set forth below, the Examiner has indicated the allowability, inter alia, of the subject matter introduced in original dependent Claims 19 and 21 if rewritten in independent forms including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening

claim. In the interest of expediting the prosecution of the present application, Applicants have amended original dependent Claims 19 and 21 by placing them in independent form including all of the limitations of now canceled base Claims 12 and 20, respectively, including the limitations of any intervening claim. As such, Claims 16 and 21 are distinguished over Fujinawa. Original dependent Claims 13 and 17-19 have been amended to depend from Claim 16, and original dependent Claims 22-25 have been amended to depend from Claim 21. On this basis, dependent Claims 13, 14, 19, 24, and 25 are likewise distinguished over Fujinawa.

Accordingly, the rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) should be withdrawn.

Allowable Subject Matter

The Examiner has allowed original Claims 7, 9, 10, and 11.

The Examiner has objected to original Claims 1-6, 15-18, and 21-23, but would allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of their respective base claims including an intervening claims, and resolving any other related outstanding objection or rejection. As referred to above, Applicants have amended original dependent Claims 19 and 21 by placing them in independent form including all of the limitations of now canceled base Claims 12 and 20, respectively, including the limitations of any intervening claim. Original dependent Claims 13 and 17-19 have been amended to depend from Claim 16, and original dependent Claims 22-25 have been amended to depend from Claim 21. All other outstanding issues of objection and rejection have been resolved. As such, Applicants respectfully submit that all pending claims are now in condition for allowance.

CONCLUSION

Applicants respectfully submits that Claims 1-11, 13-19, and 20-25 are in condition for allowance and a notice to that effect is respectfully solicited.

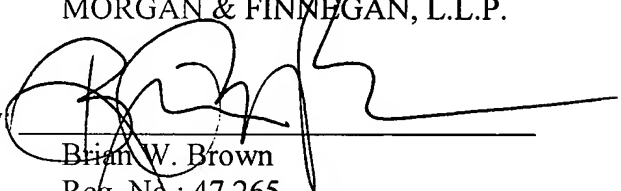
AUTHORIZATION

The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any fees that may be required for the filing of this Amendment, or credit any over payment, to Deposit Account No. 13-4500, Order No. 1232-4837.

Date: January 11, 2006

Respectfully submitted,
MORGAN & FINNEGAN, L.L.P.

By


Brian W. Brown

Reg. No.: 47,265

(202) 857-7887 Telephone

(202) 857-7929 Facsimile

Correspondence Address:

MORGAN & FINNEGAN, L.L.P.
Three World Financial Center
New York, NY 10281-2101